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# Message Text

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70/67
ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

AID-20 PC-04 DRC-01 NIC-01 /115 W
---------- 054313
R 081515Z SEP 73
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9339
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 7426

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (LAST SIX LINES OF MESSAGE)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR OAS CU VE CO
SUBJ: VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE

1. IN WHAT WAS FOR HIM AN UNUSUALLY FRIENDLY GESTURE, FOREIGN MINISTER APPROACHED ME EVENING OF SEPT 5 AT SPANISH EMBASSY RECEPTION AND APOLOGIZED FOR DELAY IN RESPONDING TO MY REQUEST FOR MEETING STATING HE HAD BEEN OVERWHELMED WITH WORK. WHEN I EXPLAINED THAT I HAD DESIRED MEETING TO DISCUSS VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE IN CUBA MAINLY WITH REGARD TO THE LEGALITIES HIS FACE FELL AND HE REPLIED THAT THERE WAS NO LONGER ANY POINT IN DISCUSSING THAT PARTICULAR ISSUE AS COLOMBIA HAD ALREADY ASSURED VENEZUELA OF ITS FULL SUPPORT.

COMMENT: VASQUEZ DOES NOT WANT TO DISCUSS THIS ISSUE BECAUSE HE IS VERY MUCH AWARE THAT THE VENEZUELAN POSITION CANNOT BE DEFENDED AS JURIDICALLY SOUND. AT THIS POINT, HOWEVER, VASQUEZ PLANS TO DEVOTE HIMSELF ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO SEEKING SOLUTION OF TERRITORIAL AND OTHER PROBLEMS WITH VENEZUELA AND WILL GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO BRING TWO COUNTRIES CLOSER TOGETHER.

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I HAVE DISCUSSED THE CUBAN PROBLEM IN THE CONTEXT OF THE

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VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE WITH SEVERAL LEADERS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND
OPPOSITION AS WELL AS INFLUENTIAL COLOMBIAN OPINION MAKERS
AND MEMBERS OF THE LATIN AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC CORPS. OUT OF THESE
DISCUSSIONS I HAVE GAINED THE FOLLOWING IMPRESSIONS.
OUR POSITION THAT WE SEE NO CHANGE IN CUBA BEHAVIOR DOES
NOT SQUARE WITH THEIR PERCEIVED REALITY. FIRSTLY, THEY SEE
CASTRO'S EXPORT OF REVOLUTION AS REDUCED TO MERE RHETORIC THAT
DIFFERS ONLY IN QUANTITY FROM SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED BY SEVERAL
"REVOLUTIONARY" GOVERNMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA. SECONDLY, THEY
BELIEVE WE UNDERESTIMATE THE PROGRESS LATIN AMERICA HAS MADE
IN BUILDING NATIONS CAPABLE OF WITHSTANDING INTERVENTION.
AS MUCH OF THIS ADVANCE HAS COME ABOUT THROUGH
THE DIRECT HELP OF THE U.S. THEY FIND IT STRANGE THAT WE DO
NOT RECOGNIZE THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED AND THE ACCOMPANYING
CONFIDENCE WHICH LEADS MUCH OF LATIN AMERICA TO THE CONCLUSION
THAT IT NO LONGER MAKES SENSE TO KEEP CUBA OUTSIDE THE
INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM. LASTLY, THEY BELIEVE THAT THE UNITED
STATES EXERCISED CORRECT AND INTELLIGENT LEADERSHIP IN
UTILIZING THE OAS TO EXCLUDE CASTRO GOVERNMENT FROM THE
INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM IN 1964. NOW THEY WISH TO SEE THE UNITED
STATES EXERT EQUIVALENT LEADERSHIP DEMANDED BY CHANGED CONDITIONS
AND LEAD LATIN AMERICA INTO A NEW RELATIONSHIP CONSISTENT WITH
INITIATIVES THAT WE HAVE TAKEN IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD.
ABSENT U.S. LEADERSHIP IN THIS CRUCIAL AREA THEY BELIEVE THAT
NATION AFTER NATION WILL DEFY THE OAS, RECOGNIZE CUBA AND THEREBY
WEAKEN THE OAS STRUCTURE TO THE POINT THAT IT MAY BECOME COMPLETELY
IRRELEVANT. THEY POINT OUT THAT ANY FORMULA ELABORATED IN THE OAS
ON THE CUBAN QUESTION IS DOOMED TO BE JURIDICALLY UNSOUND UNLESS IT
HAS OUR SUPPORT. THEY INSIST THAT THE VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE CONSTITUTES

AN HONEST ATTEMPT TO FILL A LEADERSHIP VOID AND WOULD AT LEAST
SERVE THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING A FIGLEAF OF REGIONAL COVER FOR
THE NEW RELATIONSHIP THAT MUCH OF LATIN AMERICA HAS EITHER
ESTABLISHED OR SHORTLY WILL ESTABLISH WITH CUBA.
WHITE

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# Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994
**Channel Indicators:** n/a
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED
**Concepts:** n/a
**Control Number:** n/a
**Copy:** SINGLE
**Draft Date:** 08 SEP 1973
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960
**Decaption Note:**
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED
**Disposition Approved on Date:**
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004
**Disposition Event:**
**Disposition History:** n/a
**Disposition Reason:**
**Disposition Remarks:**
**Document Number:** 1973BOGOTA07426
**Document Source:** CORE
**Document Unique ID:** 00
**Drafter:** n/a
**Enclosure:** n/a
**Executive Order:** GS WHITE
**Errors:** N/A
**Film Number:** n/a
**From:** BOGOTA
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Image Path:**
**ISecure:** 1
**Legacy Key:** link1973/newtext/t19730947/aaaabikj.tel
**Line Count:** 96
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE
**Office:** ACTION ARA
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Page Count:** 2
**Previous Channel Indicators:**
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a
**Reference:** n/a
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED
**Review Authority:** golinofr
**Review Comment:** n/a
**Review Content Flags:**
**Review Date:** 17 JAN 2002
**Review Event:**
**Review Exemptions:** n/a
**Review History:** RELEASED <17-Jan-2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <08 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
**Review Markings:**

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**Review Media Identifier:**
**Review Referrals:** n/a
**Review Release Date:** n/a
**Review Release Event:** n/a
**Review Transfer Date:**
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a
**Secure:** OPEN
**Status:** NATIVE
**Subject:** VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE
**TAGS:** PFOR, CU, VE, CO, OAS
**To:** STATE
**Type:** TE
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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